

The Washington Post

Weather

TODAY: Mostly sunny, High 49.
Wind northeast at 6-12 mph.
Friday: Cloudy with scattered rain
and drizzle, High 49.
Yesterday: AQI: 30. Temp. range:
34-65. Details on Page D2.

112TH YEAR ••• No. 17 © 1988, The Washington Post Company

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1988

Pan Am Jet Crashes in Scotland, Killing at Least 273

Dead Include 15 Villagers; On-Board Blast Suspected



A piece of fuselage lies near burning houses ignited when a Pan American Boeing 747 crashed in Lockerbie, Scotland.

By A. D. Home
Washington Post Foreign Service

A Pan American jumbo jet bound from London to New York crashed into a Scottish village last night, apparently killing all 258 persons aboard.

The Boeing 747 slammed into a gasoline station and several houses in the town of Lockerbie 15 miles north of the English border, igniting a fireball that rose up to 300 feet into the sky.

A police official in the nearby town of Dumfries reported that at least 15 villagers had been killed. Local hospitals said 12 seriously burned villagers had been rushed in for treatment.

There was no immediate indication of what caused the accident, which took place in clear weather less than an hour's flight time from London.

"There were no mayday signals,"

a Pan Am vice president, Jeff Kriener, told reporters in New York last night. The plane had left London's Heathrow Airport at 6:25 p.m. local time (1:25 p.m. EST), and the last contact from the crew was at 7:15 p.m., when the plane was cruising at 31,000 feet, Kriener said. He added that it was "precisely on course" when it disappeared from radar screens.

As rescue teams reached the crash scene, about 275 miles northwest of London, there were indications of an explosion aboard the plane. The jet's cabin door was found about 10 miles from the rest of the cockpit, while an engine was found on a highway outside the village. At least one witness said the plane may have been on fire before it hit the ground.

The plane, Pan Am Flight 103, "disappeared from radar contact at 7:15 p.m.," British Department of Transport spokesman Mike Verti-

gans said in a telephone interview. Kriener gave the time the plane hit the ground as 7:22. Britain's Civil Aviation Authority said Scottish air controllers had talked to the crew minutes before the crash and received no indication of any problem.

British aviation officials denied reports that the 747 may have hit another plane. One British news service report said the jet may have broken into two before hitting the ground. Brian Reed, a spokesman for Britain's Scottish Office in Edinburgh, said his office had received reports of wreckage landing in Langholm, 10 miles east of Lockerbie.

"All we know is that all those in the aircraft are dead," said David Brooks, air vice marshal for the Royal Air Force in Scotland.

Pan Am's Kriener said the airline would not release a passenger

See CRASH, A32, Col. 1

Sections

A News/Editorials
B Sports
C Style/Television/Classified
D Metro/Obituaries
E Business
Inside: The Weekly/Comics,
Washington Home
Detailed index on Page A2

Price May Vary in Areas Outside
Metropolitan Washington (See Box on A2)

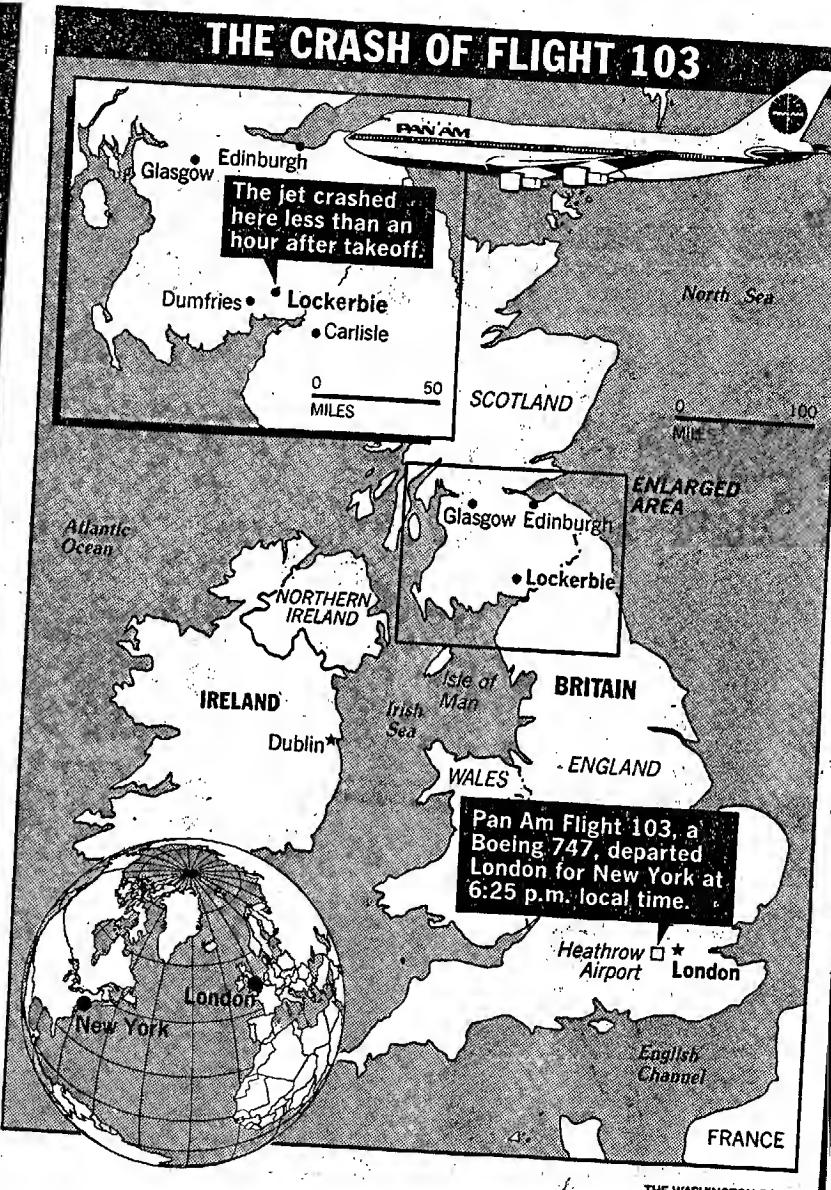
25¢

THE WASHINGTON POST

Pan Am Jet En Route to New York From London



A car blazes in the street following the crash of a Pan American Boeing 747.
ASSOCIATED PRESS



(INCTON POST

FRIDAY, JANUARY 13, 1989 E5

JACK ANDERSON and DALE VAN ATTA

Terrorists the U.S. Is Reluctant to Blame

Iran is the most likely suspect behind the December bombing of Pan Am Flight 103, according to our intelligence sources in Western Europe and Washington, but that isn't what the White House wants to hear.

British and West German intelligence services have singled out Iranian-directed terrorist groups as the culprits. Some—but not all—of the information the foreign spies have gathered has been shared with the Central Intelligence Agency.

The British and West Germans are leery of a CIA bias that seeks to make Libya's Moammar Gadhafi the bogeyman and to blame him for the 270 deaths in Lockerbie, Scotland.

One CIA official admitted to us that he understood why foreign spies were wary about sharing what they know. "It's hard to blame them," he said. "Look at the Reagan administration's past shenanigans with Libyan-related intelligence."

He was referring to 1981 rumors about a Libyan hit squad and the 1986 bombing of a Berlin disco.

West German police think the Reagan administration hyped—or manufactured—flimsy evidence blaming Gadhafi for the disco bombing in which one U.S. serviceman was killed. President Reagan used the incident to justify a subsequent bombing raid on Libyan sites, including Gadhafi's Tripoli home.

In 1981, the CIA paid tens of thousands of dollars to a Middle East informant who gave the CIA what it wanted to hear. He manufactured false reports of a Libyan hit squad out to assassinate Reagan. The story unraveled when alert West European intelligence officers noted that the

informant had included among the alleged hit squad members several people who had sworn to kill Gadhafi, not Reagan.

Now the Pan Am bombing has become the CIA's top priority. Our sources say the CIA is prepared to spend "several million dollars" to find out who is responsible. The flaw in this approach is that it encourages gadflies to come forward with what the United States wants to hear—that Gadhafi did it.

These espionage entrepreneurs know that Reagan has been obsessed with Gadhafi for eight years and might like to have the final say. The last thing Reagan wants to hear is that terrorists directed by Iran bombed Flight 103. Reagan has been humiliated by Iran and is not anxious for a final ignominious footnote in his dealings with Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

That's what makes the West European intelligence services so wary of sharing Iranian-related information with the CIA. They pointed out to us that U.S. Embassy officials across Europe and the Middle East have pooh-poohed the claims of a shadowy pro-Iranian group that has been trying to assert responsibility for the bombing.

The group calls itself "The Guardians of the Islamic Revolution" and claims it was motivated by the downing of an Iranian airliner last July by a U.S. warship. The group, in a call to London news services, warned "there will be another present in the new year for America" if the United States doesn't deport Reza Pahlavi, son of Iran's late shah.

Iranian government officials have denied any involvement. But to believe them is ludicrous.

Washington Post

AROUND THE WORLD

PLO Said to Aid Pan Am Probe

Representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization have provided helpful information to western agents trying to determine who was responsible for blowing up the Pan Am jumbo jet over Scotland last month, according to ABC News.

The television network, quoting western intelligence sources, reported last night that "several dozen PLO intelligence agents" have been working alongside British and West German investigators and have delivered "exceedingly valuable" information in the case.

The report marked the first confirmation of the PLO's involvement in the crash investigation. It followed a pledge by PLO chairman Yassir Arafat to assist in the probe.

The PLO's willingness to cooperate is seen as an effort by the organization to show that it did not sabotage Pan Am Flight 103, which was en route from London to New York. The main suspects in the case are said to be extremist Palestinians who oppose Arafat's recent move to renounce terrorism and acknowledge Israel's right to exist.

SNOW
HIGH 36, LOW 26-PAGE C/F

The Washington Times

2/36

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1989

WASHINGTON, D.C.

PHONE: 636-3000
SUBSCRIBER SERVICE: 636-3333 **25 cents**

Pan Am jet crash called a 'hit' for Iran

By Bill Gertz
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Western intelligence agencies concluded last week that the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 was commissioned by Iran's Revolutionary Guards and carried out by Palestinian terrorists — with support from the Syrian and Libyan governments.

The bombing was one of at least seven terrorist operations contracted by the Iranians in retaliation for the downing of an Iranian commercial airliner by a U.S. Navy warship in July, Western intelligence

sources said last weekend.

Six of the operations, organized by terrorists of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), were thwarted when 13 suspected members of the group were arrested in October in West Germany, the sources said.

The seventh operation was the sabotage of a U.S. civilian airline that intelligence agencies now believe was the bombing of Flight 103. The Pan Am Boeing 747 jumbo jet exploded over Lockerbie, Scotland, Dec. 21, killing all 259 persons on

board and 11 on the ground.

The PFLP-GC has denied involvement in the Pan Am bombing.

For the Pan Am bombing, the intelligence sources said, the PFLP-GC used a "drug mule" — a courier ferrying illegal narcotics — to unwittingly carry the bomb aboard the jet when he checked his luggage at Frankfurt, West Germany — Flight 103's point of departure.

West German officials have identified the courier but have not released his name in order to protect a possible case against the blast's perpetrators, the sources said.

According to the sources, West German authorities obtained details of the bomb plot last week from Khalil Dalkamoni, a PFLP-GC commander.

Mr. Dalkamoni was arrested Oct. 26 along with 12 other suspected PFLP-GC terrorists and is still in West German custody. He had remained silent since his arrest, but began talking to authorities last week, the intelligence sources said.

Mr. Dalkamoni said several other members of the group remained at large and were not identified at the time of the arrests. These Palestin-

ians are believed to have carried out the Pan Am bombing, the sources said. They did not disclose the identities of the suspects, who are the subject of a global manhunt.

Although some of Mr. Dalkamoni's testimony surfaced in news reports last week, State Department officials denied having reached any conclusions about the bombing.

The intelligence sources agreed to discuss details of the case with The Washington Times because they said the State Department does not want to face the serious implications of naming three countries — Iran,

Syria and Libya — as being responsible for the terrorist attack.

"Qualitatively, this is not just a group of 20 radicals," one source said yesterday. "These are nations waging war. We're not talking factions; we're talking countries who have supplied the ingredients" for the bombing and other planned attacks.

If Syrian and Iranian involvement

see CRASH, page A10

A senior House Democrat wants a new dialogue with Iran. Page A11.

PAGE A10 / MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1989

CRASH

From page A1

was officially sanctioned, the "next question" the United States will have to ask is, "What are we going to do about it?" the source said.

"Terrorism isn't an 'ism,' it's a political act," said the source. "That is what State [Department] has tried to avoid."

President Bush has promised to "seek hard" and "punish severely" those responsible for the attack.

State Department officials, the sources said, have disclosed some investigative findings because they fear the public's misapprehension that the bombing was a radical Palestinian retaliation for the United States' opening of a dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

L. Paul Bremer, the State Department's ambassador-at-large for counterterrorism, said yesterday

that it was "premature" to say anyone in the U.S. government has reached conclusions about the perpetrators.

"I'm confident we're getting closer, but we haven't reached any conclusions yet," Mr. Bremer said.

A State Department official, who declined to be named, said he was unaware that Mr. Dalkamoni talked to West German authorities. The official denied that the department was attempting to downplay the evidence.

As for the revenge theory outlined by the intelligence sources, the official said, "It's a plausible explanation. It may very well come out that way."

Information obtained during interrogations of Mr. Dalkamoni confirmed facts that U.S. and British investigators had gathered about the bombing, including details about the type of explosive used, how the bomb was smuggled aboard and the motivation for the attack, the sources said.

"What Dalkamoni told us tracks with [information obtained from] other sources and findings of the investigation," one intelligence source said.

Mr. Dalkamoni said Iranian Revolutionary Guards and other Lebanese Shi'ite fundamentalists met in Beirut, Lebanon, last fall and December with PFLP-GC leader Ahmad Jibril, a former Syrian army captain and explosives expert, the sources said.

The Revolutionary Guards, one of Iran's two military forces, asked the PFLP-GC to carry out the terrorist operations in West Germany in retaliation for the July 3 downing of an Iran Air jetliner, the sources said. All 290 persons on board the Iranian plane were killed.

According to the sources, Libyan government agents supplied cash for the PFLP-GC terrorist operations. The Syrian government, through its ties to Mr. Jibril, provided intelligence support and travel documents, the sources said.

"The Libyan government paid the bills, and there was active support from Syrian intelligence," said a source. Syrian support was described as "large," although the sources declined to elaborate.

West German authorities may have "turned up the heat" on Mr. Dalkamoni to make him talk in order to counter international criticism of West German corporate involvement in building what the Bush administration has said is a chemical-weapons plant in the Libyan desert, the sources said. Of the 12 others arrested with Mr. Dalkamoni, eight have been released.

The bomb used in the Pan Am explosion contained Semtex H, an advanced, plastic explosive manufactured exclusively in the Soviet bloc, and was detonated by a sophisticated barometric mechanism designed to go off at high-altitude air pressures.

Flight 103 exploded at 31,000 feet about a half hour after taking off from London's Heathrow Airport.

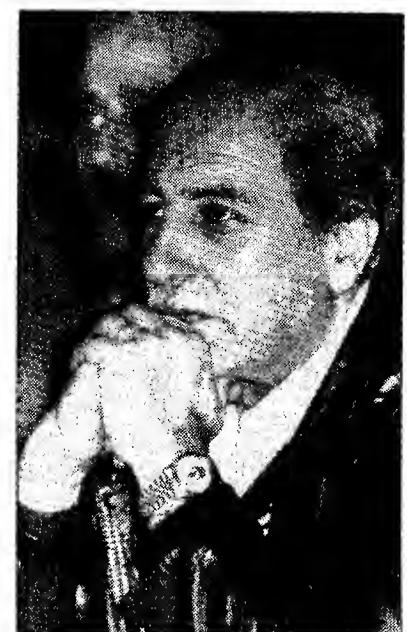
The sources said the terrorists' plan was to have the Pan Am jet explode over the Irish Sea. But strong winds forced the jet to take a more northerly course before turning east over the ocean en route to New York.

Since the plane exploded over land, investigators were able to collect evidence they would not have found in the sea.

Chemical residue of Semtex H was found on a luggage pallet recovered from the wreckage of the jet, along with evidence of narcotics, the sources said.

That evidence first linked the bombing to the PFLP-GC because it was the same type of plastic explosive West German authorities found in a bomb discovered in the group's weapons cache in October.

The bomb found in West Germany was built into a Toshiba portable radio, using Semtex H and a triggering device connected to a barometric sensor that sent an electric pulse when it sensed high-altitude air pressure.



Palestinian terrorist Ahmad Jibril devised the Pan Am jet bombing.

Hijack Alert Issued Before Lockerbie

Lawmaker Calls FAA Bulletins to Airlines 'Dangerously Inaccurate'

By Laura Parker
Washington Post Staff Writer

In the month before the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, U.S. security officials were bracing for a potential airline hijacking, not a bombing, according to documents released yesterday by a House subcommittee.

In a security bulletin dated Nov. 4, the Federal Aviation Administration cautioned U.S. carriers operating in Europe about the possibility of a hijacking in Europe "in the first half of November."

Pan American World Airways also posted an additional lookout at the airport in Frankfurt to watch for passengers who fit the FAA profile of a terrorist, according to the documents.

Subsequent bulletins warned airlines to be on the watch for a bomb concealed in a radio-cassette recorder. But even after the Dec. 21 bombing, the FAA was still concerned about a possible hijacking. A bulletin dated Dec. 24 listed the names of 13 people believed to be planning a hijacking.

Excerpts of 27 FAA security bulletins issued in 1988 and six

bulletins issued through Feb. 16 were made public by Rep. Cardiss Collins (D-Ill.), who chairs the House Government Operations subcommittee on government activities and transportation. She criticized the bulletins as being ineffective and "dangerously inaccurate."

The bombing of Flight 103, which killed 270 persons, is likely to bring a closer examination of FAA security measures, existing security rules and the emphasis placed on information the agency gives to airlines. Collins said yesterday she plans to hold hearings on those subjects next month.

Sen. Frank R. Lautenberg (D-N.J.), chairman of the Senate Appropriations transportation subcommittee, last week called for a presidential inquiry into the bombing.

FAA spokesman John Leyden said the agency would have no comment on the documents Collins released until it had a chance to review them.

Generally, the FAA allows airlines to develop their own security programs, dictating only that planes be secured against the threat of bombings or hijackings.

The bulletins issued last November prompted Pan Am to supplement examination of carry-on

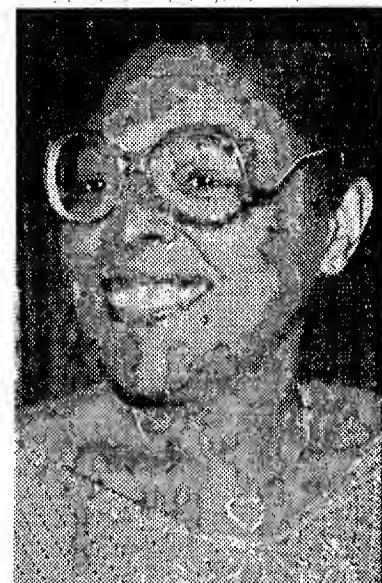
bags with additional hand checks. But Pan Am's increased security for checked baggage included only an additional X-ray inspection, despite an FAA warning that some sophisticated bombs can pass through X-rays undetected.

The bomb that exploded aboard the Boeing 747 jumbo jet was concealed inside checked baggage. Officials believe the bomb was made of a plastic explosive known as Semtex that can elude X-ray machines.

A British Transport Department memo written Dec. 29 said bags transferred to the Pan Am jetliner at Heathrow from a Frankfurt flight did not receive a second security examination, ABC News reported yesterday.

Two weeks after the November warning about a possible hijacking, the FAA issued a general bulletin to airlines about a bomb seized by West German police in an Oct. 26 antiterrorist raid in Frankfurt. The bulletin said a Toshiba "Bombat 453" radio had been seized by police in the arrest of 16 people believed to be connected with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command.

According to the bulletin, the device contained approximately



REP. CARDISS COLLINS
... plans hearings on FAA measures

11 ounces of "a plastic type explosive wrapped in a metallic coated 'Tobler' brand candy wrapper." The bomb contained an electrical detonator and "a barometric device connected to a computer chip, which was believed functional and apparently part of the trigger or arming function."

The bulletin continued: "The potential target cannot be identified at this time although it was identified that the [bomb] would be very difficult to detect via normal X-ray inspection, indicating that it might be intended to pass undisclosed through areas subject to extensive security controls, such as airports."

8836

Pete Carson Jansson
30 May 89

Pete Carson Jansson
30 May 89

CLOSING IN ON PAN AM BOMBER

A London newspaper, the weekly Sunday Express, reported Sunday that the person who made the bomb that blew up Pan Am Flight 103 is a Libyan known to international security officials as "The Professor" because of his knowledge of explosives. The Express, quoting unidentified detectives, also said a Lebanese student, 21-year-old Khalid Jaafar, of Dearborn, Mich., unwittingly carried the bomb onto the flight in a radio-cassette player given to him as a gift. It did not say who gave it to him.

Investigators have concluded that the jet was blown up by plastic explosives hidden inside a radio-cassette player.

Also Sunday, Britain acknowledged that a Dec. 19 warning about possible bombs on airliners was not mailed until after Jan. 1 — at least 11 days after the Pan Am jet blew up Dec. 21, killing all 259 people aboard and 11 people on the ground.

*8836**THE WASHINGTON POST 14 APR '89*

Pan Am Bomb Probers Differ on Courier Report

By David B. Ottaway
and Laura Parker
Washington Post Staff Writers

Government sources disagreed yesterday over a report that named a college student as the passenger who unwittingly carried a bomb onto Pan Am Flight 103, destroyed Dec. 21 over Lockerbie, Scotland.

Some U.S. intelligence sources confirmed a CBS report Wednesday that the dupe who unknowingly brought the bomb aboard was a Lebanese-American college student traveling home to visit relatives in Detroit for the Christmas holidays.

But other sources involved in building a criminal case based on the evidence available cautioned

that the number of possible dupes has only been narrowed to a "handful."

U.S. antiterrorist officials said Khalid Jaafar, a Lebanese-American college student returning to Detroit from Frankfurt for the holidays, is on the list of suspected dupes, but added that several other passengers with Middle East "connections" are being studied as well.

Jaafar's parents, who operate a gasoline station in Detroit, have told FBI agents their son was not involved in the bombing.

U.S. intelligence agencies have reached conclusions sooner than FBI and other European law enforcement officials who are seeking to obtain conclusive evidence before making their findings public.

The U.S. intelligence sources said they believe the prime suspect in the bombing is a relative of an official in the Syrian-backed Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command. Hafez Dalkamoni, who was among 14 suspected members of the PFLP-GC arrested in an antiterrorist sweep in West Germany last October, is still in prison there.

But other sources said that while Dalkamoni has brothers in Tunis and Algiers, he has no known relatives in Europe, and denied that he is cooperating with investigators.

"If someone [in the group] was cooperating, we would have broken the case some time ago," said one official.

Investigators believe the courier

on the Pan Am flight was given a radio cassette recorder, which contained a well-disguised plastic bomb, without realizing what it was. The cassette recorder was put inside a suitcase and was placed aboard Flight 103 as checked baggage. The Boeing 747 exploded at high altitude over Lockerbie, killing all 259 people on board and 11 on the ground.

In the October raid, police seized weapons and three Toshiba cassette recorders containing hidden explosives.

The White House announced that President Bush will visit Lockerbie on his way back from a NATO summit in Brussels and visits to Italy, England and West Germany in late May.

11 January 1998

JACK ANDERSON and DALE VAN ATTA

Hiding the Story on Flight 103

President Bush and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher secretly agreed last spring to play down the truth about who blew up Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland.

After both leaders had intelligence reports pointing the finger at a terrorist hired by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Thatcher called Bush. In that conversation, they agreed that neither could stand the political heat of making the evidence public because both were impotent to retaliate.

Highly placed White House sources told us that the phone call took place about mid-March. By that time, both the British and U.S. intelligence services had followed the trail of evidence to terrorist Ahmed Jibril as the hit man who was paid by Iran to blow up the plane. The intelligence services had evidence that Khomeini and his successor, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, had approved the bombing.

Pan Am 103 originated in Frankfurt, West Germany, stopped in London and was bound for New York when a bomb exploded at 30,000 feet over Scotland on Dec. 21, 1988. All 259 passengers were killed, along with 11 people in the village of Lockerbie.

Iranian-sponsored terrorists quickly asserted responsibility, but the British and U.S. governments put out the story that there were several suspects. Behind the scenes, all the evidence pointed to Jibril. He had been shopping for money for his terrorist group, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command. His usual sponsors, Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi and Syrian President Hafez Assad, were short of cash.

The intelligence reports told Bush and Thatcher that Jibril went to Iran in July 1988 and struck the deal with Khomeini and Rafsanjani to blow up an American plane in retaliation for the accidental U.S. downing of an Iranian airliner earlier that month.

When the intelligence reports began to leak last March, Thatcher called Bush to discuss their problem. She said no purpose would be served by making public the evidence against Iran because neither the United States or Britain could respond.

Bush knew that Khomeini had proved the undoing of Jimmy Carter and had nearly proved the undoing of Ronald Reagan. Carter lost an election because he couldn't get American hostages back from Iran, and Reagan suffered the biggest blow of his presidency when he tried to trade arms to Iran for American hostages.

So Bush didn't argue when Thatcher suggested that they "low-key" the findings—say that the investigation was inconclusive and long-term.

After the call, word was quickly passed to top officials conducting the Pan Am investigation that they were not to make any off-the-record remarks implicating Jibril or Iran. In Britain, when the press speculated about possible perpetrators, investigators called the speculation "wild" and "irresponsible."

U.S. intelligence sources who told us about the call said the decision was political cowardice.

Thatcher, the "Iron Lady," earned her reputation in a war with Argentina over the Falkland Islands. But by last March, her popularity was on the wane and she didn't need to be embarrassed by Khomeini. Bush, still fighting his "wimp" image, didn't want to face the ultimate calls for retribution.